

DEFENSE PLEA MADE AS CIVIC BODY OPENS SESSIONS-HERE

Seth Low Tells National Federation That U. S. Must Have "Strong Right Arm" to Bring About Peace.

Other Prominent Workers for Welfare of Wage Earners Urge Preparedness for America in Striking Phrases.

Pleas for preparedness, framed in striking phrases, marked the opening session of the National Civic Federation convention at the New Willard this morning.

Seth Low, former mayor of New York, who is president of the federation, told the delegates in his opening address that if the United States is to help bring about peace in Europe it must be "by the strength of our right arm."

"Any plan of military preparedness which makes the flag under which we live the emblem of our life, our all, and not a rag with which to protect the corpse from which the spirit has fled I welcome," asserted Miss Maude Wetmore, in presenting her annual report as chairman of the woman's department.

OTHER HIGH LIGHTS.

Other high lights of this morning's session included:
A plea by Henry B. Macfarland that the federation take especial pride in the development of Washington as the Nation's Capital and a model municipality.
A declaration by Louis A. Condit, of Boston chairman of the welfare department, that the manufacture of war munitions has given the department a chance to co-operate with manufacturers in constructing their new plants.
An extended argument in favor of minimum wage legislation by A. J. Porter, chairman of the Minimum Wage Commission.
An outline of the assistance extended to legislators in drafting compensation laws, by August Delmont, of the workmen's compensation department.

Red Room Crowded.

The red room, in which the federation is holding its open meetings, was crowded at the start this morning. The audience included prominent workers for welfare of wage-earners and students of industrial conditions from all parts of the country. A formal welcome was extended to the federation, on behalf of the District, by former District Commissioner Macfarland.

A feature of the report read by Miss Maude Wetmore was that dealing with the accomplishments, for the year, of the District section of the woman's

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HARRIS NAMED HEAD OF YARDS AND DOCKS

Secretary of Navy Daniels Confirms Announcement Made by Times Last Week.

Secretary of the Navy Daniels today confirmed the announcement made in The Times last week that Lieut. Commander Frederic R. Harris, of Philadelphia, will succeed Rear Admiral H. R. Stanford as chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks of the Navy Department.
Rear Admiral Stanford, whose term of service has ended, and who now will resume his former rank of lieutenant commander, is slated to act as constructor in charge of the new battleship at the Mare Island navy yard, San Francisco.
Lieutenant Commander Harris was stationed in Washington in the bureau of yards until January of last year, when he was transferred to similar duty in the Philadelphia navy yard.
He will assume the rank and pay of rear admiral as soon as his nomination is confirmed by the Senate.

Zero Weather Due Here Tonight, Says The Weather Man

Mercury on Downward Path from 17 Degrees This Morning.
May Reach 1914 Mark.

Get out the ear muffs!
Zero weather is promised Washington tonight for the first time in two years.

Being the greatest convention city in the country, Washington is entertaining today what is practically a convention of cold waves representing all the talent in that direction in both the extreme North and the extreme South, borne into the city on the wings of a stiff north breeze, which was inspired by a severe storm from the Gulf of Mexico and added to by the cold wave from the Northwest and another from the vicinity of Hudson bay.

The thermometer commenced playing queer tricks this morning, to emphasize the presence of extreme weather conditions. At 8 o'clock this morning 17 was registered at the Weather Bureau. But the appearance of the sun did not send it up. Instead the mercury began to go down, and by 10:30 o'clock had reached the mark of 12. The sun got in its best looks about this time and started the temperature up again, the mark of 16 having been reached by 1 o'clock.

The last zero temperature registered in this city was on February 25, 1914, when one degree below was reached for a brief period.

A let up in the cold is not promised until Wednesday and that is only promised in a half-hearted way.

FIREMEN SUFFER AT GEORGETOWN BLAZE

Coated With Ice, They Battle With Flames at Rosslyn Supply Company's Plant.

Ice-coated, and lashed by a forty-mile wind, members of six fire engine companies, two truck companies, and the United States fire department, today fought a battle against a devastating fire that raged the Rosslyn Supply Company's storehouse. Twenty-seventh and I streets northwest. The damage is estimated at \$25,000.

Not in many years, say veteran fire-fighters, has a fight against flames been waged under such adverse conditions. The Rosslyn supply company's storehouse, a two-story building, was completely consumed. The fire started about 3:30 o'clock from the ignition, the police say, of oil which ran from an over-filled lamp. The flames gained instant headway among the building materials such as laths, tar-paper and lime with which the two-story frame structure was stocked.

On the first alarm Engine Companies 5, 23, and 1, with the fireboat, and No. 2 Truck, under the command of a battalion chief responded.

The firemen knew their fight would be a hard one, and the firemen's coffee fund was immediately drawn upon, and quantities of the hot beverage rushed to the scene of the fire.
The blaze started about 3:30 o'clock from the ignition, the police say, of oil which ran from an over-filled lamp. The flames gained instant headway among the building materials such as laths, tar-paper and lime with which the two-story frame structure was stocked.

Sound Second Alarm.
As soon as the firemen saw that the flames would give them a battle, a second alarm was sounded. That (Continued on Second Page.)

Skaters Flock to Every Pond in City

Cold Weather Brings Out Hosts of Enthusiasts—River Ice Still Too Thin.

Skating is coming into its own in Washington this winter. Cold, dry weather has brought out the skaters in large numbers. The ice on the Potomac river is still too thin to permit making a figure eight.
At the Chevy Chase Club the tennis courts have been flooded ever since the beginning of cold weather, and they are now frozen solid, making the best semi-artificial skating ponds in this vicinity. Members of the club have been enjoying the skating in large numbers since the cold wave struck Washington, and today the courts were crowded.
At the Zoo the ice is in good condition for skating, and many couples are making the most of their opportunity today. The ice in the river and the tidal basin is not solid enough for skating, and prospective skaters have been warned away from this vicinity by officers in charge of Potomac park.

MOURN WIDOW UNMOVED AT DEATH RECITAL

Two Witnesses Show Where Negroes Are Said to Have Thrown Revolvers.

ESTATE IS TO BE DIVIDED

Accused Widow Will Receive Uncontested One-third of Physician's Estate.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Jan. 17.—While two additional witnesses for the State told how the negroes, Brown and Spellman, pointed out to officers where they threw the revolvers with which Dr. Charles P. Mohr was shot to death, the widow, accused of instigating the crime, sat silent and unmoved in court today.
With the resumption of the trial of Mrs. Mohr and her alleged accomplices, the prosecution set about corroborating the testimony of Police Chief Robbins, of Barrington, who told last week of taking the negroes over the scene of the shooting. William E. Burgess and George O. Moody, identified on a chart scene near the spot where Dr. Mohr was killed and his companion, Miss Emily Burger, wounded.
Under an agreement by counsel for the varied interests, Mrs. Mohr expects to receive without contest one-third of the estate of Dr. Mohr. The other two-thirds, it was understood, will be divided equally among Dr. Mohr's four children. They are Virginia and Charles P. Mohr, Jr., the children of General Townsend, and Ernest and Charles Mohr, Jr., children of Dr. Mohr's previous marriage.
According to Attorney Hurley, the estate will not exceed \$250,000.

WANT CITY RULERS TO NAME RECORDER

Committeemen Give Favorable Consideration to Commissioners' Recommendation.

Appointment of the Recorder of Deeds for the District will be taken out of the hands of the President and given to the District Commissioners by a provision which it is expected will be incorporated in the District appropriation bill.

Information to this effect was obtained today when it was learned that the provision in question, which was recommended by the Commissioners, was being given favorable consideration by some of the members of the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, which has the bill in charge, although the section has not been formally reached.

If finally adopted, the clause will transfer from the President to the District Commissioners the embarrassing problem of filling a vacancy that has existed for more than eighteen months. Heretofore the position has been held since the Administration of President Cleveland by a colored man, The President, it is stated, had hoped to follow this custom and appoint a man of that race. Notice has been served on the President by Senator Vardaman of Mississippi and other Southern Senators that the appointment of a colored man would not be confirmed, and last week Bishop Walters, President of the Colored Democratic League, who called on the President, declared that the latter informed him that because of this opposition he would appoint a white man.
Today a delegation of Georgia Congressmen, called on the President and urged the appointment of Vivian C. Bell, a brother of Congressman Thomas Bell of Georgia, as recorder.

BILL ASKS CHECK ON CARRYING PISTOLS

Senator Shields' Measure Would Also Stop Interstate Transportation.

Carrying of pistols or other firearms in the District, as well as throughout the country, and their sale and interstate transportation are prohibited in a bill introduced in the Senate today by Senator Shields of Tennessee. The bill would not interfere with firearms for army and navy use. It was referred to the Judiciary Committee.
Senator Jones of Washington introduced a bill providing that such components as are erected on the grounds between the Capitol and the Union Station shall be memorials for women.
Senator Hollis introduced a bill prohibiting interstate of bodies in what is known as the cemetery of White's Tabernacle on west Thirty-seventh street. The bill was referred to the District Committee.

TURKS BEATEN ON TIGRIS AND IN CAUCASUS

British Relief Column Drives Nearer Kut-el-Amara to Lift Siege.

TURKS ADMIT THEIR DEFEAT

Rusians Press on Kermansheh for Battle With Persian and Turkish Forces.

LONDON, Jan. 17.—The Turks have suffered severe defeats in the important struggles now raging in two of the Asiatic theaters of war. It is officially announced in the house of commons by Austin Chamberlain, secretary of state for India.
The British under General Aylmer, advancing to the relief of General Townshend and the beleaguered garrison of 50,000 Anglo-Indians at Kut-el-Amara, on the Tigris, captured a Turkish position in heavy fighting on Saturday and Sunday.
The Russians have thrown back the Turks on a wide front in their new Caucasian offensive. Petrograd reported. The Turkish defeat is admitted in an official statement issued at Constantinople, reporting that the Ottoman advanced posts have retreated several miles before superior Russian forces under the Grand Duke Nicholas, former commander-in-chief of all the Russian armies.

Continue Retreat.

Secretary Chamberlain informed commons that the Turks continue in retreat in the Kut-el-Amara region, having fallen back from the positions to which they were forced to retreat several days ago. Bad weather is hindering the British pursuit. But it is believed that the siege of Kut-el-Amara will be lifted within a few days.
Because of the marshy condition of the country between Sheik Saad and Kut-el-Amara the relief forces have been unable to march directly westward to the relief of General Townshend, but have been forced to follow the winding of the Tigris river. They are now within a day's march of the outer defenses of Kut-el-Amara itself.

Send Re-enforcements.

The first of the Turkish troops reported by the allied evacuation of Gallipoli peninsula, reached the Ottoman capital last Thursday, Athens reported. They crossed into Asia Minor two days later as the "backbone" of a new force headed for Mesopotamia. They are expected to reach the Kut-el-Amara region, where the Turks are now reported in retreat, within about two weeks.
Constantinople advices report that the war office attaches no great importance to the Russian offensive east of Kermansheh, Persia, 220 miles northeast of Baghdad, but is paying serious attention to the sudden attack launched by the Grand Duke Nicholas in the Caucasus. The British relief columns, for days held up by the weather and the strength of the Ottoman position, struck hard on both banks of the river on Thursday, dislodged the Turks, and by Friday they had taken a general retreat. According to a report sent to the war office the pursuit has passed Orash, twenty-five miles down the river from Kut-el-Amara.

On 100-Mile Front.

Sharing interest with the Tigris operations is a new offensive undertaken by the Russians in the Caucasus, over a one hundred mile front, and the impending clash of the Turks and Russians in Persia, where, from Kermansheh and Hamadan, respectively, the opposing armies are approaching a meeting.
The Caucasus offensive has been anticipated for more than two months. Signs of activity began to appear in the frontier country late in the autumn after more than six months of complete inactivity.

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POPE TO INVESTIGATE GERMANS IN BELGIUM

Will Name Church Board to Take Up Charges of Atrocities by Troops.

By HENRY WOOD.

ROME, Jan. 17.—Pope Benedict will appoint a commission within a short time to conduct an impartial investigation of German atrocities in Belgium, it was learned today. This is the first result of Cardinal Mercier's visit to Rome for an audience with the head of the Catholic Church.
The Belgian prelate presented to the Pope a huge envelope of documents supporting the Belgian episcopate's charges against the Germans when he was received in audience by His Holiness yesterday.
These cover all allegations of atrocities and violations of international law in Belgium, especially in the dioceses of Namur, Liege, and Brussels, including the charges of crimes against women and children made earlier in the war.
German churchmen favor such an investigation, too. Cardinal Mercier indicated that he intended to do what he can to bring it about.
When the committee meets, it will decide, among other things, whether hearings should be conducted.

Crosser Introduces Municipal Ownership Of Railways Measure

Provides for District Control of Traction Lines and Bond Issue.

HOPES FOR EARLY ACTION

Resolution Provides \$30,000 for Expenses of Proceedings in Condemnation.

Congressman Crosser, a Democratic member of the House District Committee, re-introduced today his bill for the public ownership of all street railway companies operating in the District of Columbia.

This bill was reported from the District Committee by a majority of one vote during the Sixty-third Congress, but failed of consideration because of the crowded calendar. Mr. Crosser will endeavor to get an early start on the legislation at this session by calling together the subcommittee on taxation, of which he is chairman, which is expected to recommend a favorable report on the bill by the full District Committee.

For Early Action.

Congressman Crosser said today he hopes for early and favorable action on the bill. That municipal ownership of street railways is feasible and profitable, Mr. Crosser contends, is shown by the experience of San Francisco.
"San Francisco is making money out of its street railways, and is enabled to pay its operating expenses an hour, and to treat all its employees well. The same thing can be done in Washington."
The Crosser bill introduced today is the same as that offered last session. It provides for a valuation of the street railway systems by the Public Utilities Commission, which shall determine the amount due the owners of the properties when they are taken over by the District government.

Provides for Appeal.

If the owners of the street railway systems are dissatisfied with the award of the commission, exclusive jurisdiction is given the Court of Appeals of the District to review the award.
The issuance of District bonds, in such denominations and amounts as the District Commissioners may deem necessary, is provided for as a means of paying for the acquisition of the property. It is provided that these bonds shall pay interest at 3.5 per cent, and become payable in thirty years. Control and management of the street railways after their acquisition shall be under the direction of the District Commissioners.
An initial appropriation of \$30,000 is provided for the expenses of the condemnation proceedings.

ADAMS BREAKS FAST AFTER THIRTY DAYS

Two Glasses of Malted Milk Form First Food He Has Tasted in Month.

With two glasses of malted milk, J. Ray Adams, clerk to the Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage, today broke his fast of thirty days.
For an entire month no food whatever had passed the lips of Mr. Adams. He had lived entirely on water, hot and cold, and apparently thrived on the diet.

Mr. Adams began his fast to cure chronic intestinal indigestion. He asserts that he had taken medicine until he was discouraged, and, to an extent, weary of spending money.
During the fast, the Senate Committee clerk has lost only ten pounds in weight, and he asserts that the indigestion disappeared on the second day of the fast period.

"How do you feel?" asked interviewers today.
"Better than you do," said Mr. Adams, and he looked it. There was no trace of nervousness or weakness about Mr. Adams, and he looked in a "tip-top" shape as though he had eaten regularly and well.
"I took a little malted milk this morning," he said. "I shall live on malted milk for the next few days and then may begin to take a little toast or a soft egg. I believe I have cured my indigestion. I never felt better in my life."

POMERENE TO PUSH PENSIONS MEASURE

Meeting of Civil Service Committee to Consider Bill in Short Time.

Senator Pomerene of Ohio is planning to take up seriously his bill for a pension and retirement system for employees of the Government in the classified service.
He will call a meeting of the Committee on Civil Service in a short time. He intends, also, to address the Senate on it.
Senator Pomerene believes that the proposed legislation ought to be enacted and he intends to do what he can to bring it about.
When the committee meets, it will decide, among other things, whether hearings should be conducted.



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CONGRESSMAN ROBT. CROSSER

TAX ON GASOLINE TO HALT INCREASE

Congressman Johnson Proposes Impost of \$1 Per Gallon Above 15 Cents.

A new and drastic method for lowering the price of gasoline was proposed in a House resolution introduced today by Congressman Ben Johnson, chairman of the District of Columbia committee. Mr. Johnson proposes that the manufacturer of gasoline shall pay a tax of \$1 per gallon on all of his product sold at a price above 15 cents per gallon.

While other House members are talking of investigating the "gasoline trust," the Kentucky member believes the situation may be met speedily by the levy of an internal revenue tax that will prohibit absolutely the sale of the product at the present excessive prices. His proposed tax would fall on the original seller of the gasoline and would mean that no manufacturer could ask more than 15 cents for the fluid when sold to the dealer.
"I believe that fifty to seventy-five men in this House have told me they would vote for such a bill," said Congressman Johnson. "If the bill is reported from the Ways and Means Committee I think it will pass and it should pass."

COLD BRINGS MANY PLEAS FROM NEEDY

Charitable Institutions of District Swamped With Demands for Food.

The bitter cold of this morning brought upon the charitable institutions of the District the heaviest demands that have been made this season. At the Associated Charities the demand was not felt so much, as the seekers for aid from this institution usually come after a cold wave.
At the Salvation Army, the Gospel Mission and the Central Union Mission the demands were the heaviest of the year, however. People without food or shelter came into the various missions and restrooms last night seeking sustenance and comfort.
This morning many others, driven in by the cold in their rooms or having no place to go to escape the rigors of the weather, applied for shelter and food. Most of the places where free lodging and food are given or where such things can be obtained for the little work were taxed to their capacity this morning.

ENGLISH BUYING UP ROUMANIAN GRAIN

BUCHAREST, Jan. 17.—An English syndicate today closed a deal for the purchase of 80,000 tons of Roumanian grain, paying \$5,000,000 in gold.
The entire Roumanian grain surplus will be purchased by the allies, it is understood here, in conformity with the plan of "starving out" Germany.

BANDIT CHIEF'S BODY PLACED ON EXHIBITION BY MEXICANS

Two Other Generals and Eight Followers Rounded Up by Carranza Soldiers and Summarily Executed.

Indignation Still at Fever Heat in Texas Over Massacre of Americans—Mexicans Are Warned Against Banditry.

EL PASO, Jan. 17.—The body of Gen. Jose Rodriguez, Villa's cavalry leader, alleged to have been one of the leaders in the Chihuahua massacre, was placed on public exhibition today in the yard of the Juarez customs house.

The gruesome show was intended to prove that the Carranza government was determined to punish the murderers of Americans and foreigners.

A placard on the executed bandit leader's body announced that all enemies of the de facto government would meet a like fate.

TEN MORE SHOT.

The death order was also carried out when Gen. Manuel Baca Valles and Enrique Cisneros, with eight followers, were shot by a Carranza firing squad at Casas Grandes yesterday, it was announced today.
Valles was known as Villa's official executioner, successor of the late Gen. Rodolfo L. Fierro, "the butcher."
Generals Rivas and Alameda, of the Villa forces, were executed by the same firing squad that ended Rodriguez's life at Madera Thursday.

While soldiers of the de facto government are rounding up the bandits, an exodus of Americans from northern Mexico is in progress today. Three trains are reported en route to the border with refugees. All are under heavy guard of Carranza soldiers. A report that a train from Parral, in southern Chihuahua, had been captured by bandits proved baseless. This train was held up for the arrival of refugees from neighboring districts.

Britons Told To Go.

H. C. Miles, British diplomatic agent here, has been ordered by Ambassador Spring-Rice to order all British subjects out of northern Mexico immediately.
The bitterness engendered here by the massacre of eighteen Americans at Santa Ysabel last Monday has not abated. Thousands attended the funeral yesterday of C. R. Watson and R. P. McIlhatton, two of the victims. Watson's young son was saluted by a group of United States soldiers who attended the funeral. The soldiers recognized the boy, dressed in the uniform of a military school. Young Watson returned the salute.

Report That Americans Were Promised Safety Confirmed by Official

Definite proof that the seventeen Americans, victims of the wholesale murder last Monday at Santa Ysabel, Mexico, were given every reason to believe by the Carranza authorities that they would be safe from attack was received at the State Department today in a lengthy report from Collector of Customs Cobb at El Paso.
At the same time, the department received a telegram from Consul Thomas D. Edwards at Juarez confirming statements attributed to him that he had asked for protection for the mining properties belonging to the Americans at the request of the State Department.
Officials of the department, seeking still to stand by previous statements of President Wilson and Secretary Lansing that the Americans had gone into the Santa Ysabel district despite warnings to keep out, declare that the protection asked for the properties of the Cuel Mining Company did not mean protection for the lives of the Americans who might go there to operate them.
There is still a difference of opinion among high officials of the department as to whether or not Edwards received the instructions he refers to. An inquiry is being made. The report of Cobb and the reply of Edwards were incorporated in a statement issued by the department today.
Collector Cobb also reported to the State Department today that advice reaching him indicated Bert Kramer, previously reported killed in Mexico, is alive.
That the Mexican problem will not down was again demonstrated in the Senate today. Senator Gore of Oklahoma, one of the Democratic leaders, and close to the Wilson Administration, introduced a resolution which was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee, authorizing and directing the